

Lesson 7: Are Miracles Possible?

Signs of God or Gullibility?

MIRACLES Authenticate The Messenger

Miracles are a sign from God that says this man speaks for me.
(Old Testament example: Moses)

In the 1500 years between Moses and Jesus there were about 250 miracles. This averages one miracle every 6 years.

WHY MIRACLES?

1. The miracle confirms the message.
2. The sign conforms the sermon.
3. Most Biblical miracles confirm a messenger:
 - >>Moses
 - >>Elijah
 - >>Jesus & Apostles

Why? These are new prophets, who need new confirmation.

SOME BELIEVE Miracles Are Impossible:

- >>Noah
- >>Resurrections
- >>Jonah

The greatest miracle in the Bible Genesis 1:1 – if God can create the Universe out of nothing, all other miracles are possible.

DID DAVID HUME PROVE MIRACLES ARE NOT CREDIBLE?

David Hume's Objections:

1. Natural Law is by definition a description of a regular occurrence.
2. A miracle is by definition a rare occurrence.
3. The evidence for the regular is always greater than that for the rare. (False premise)
4. A wise man always bases his belief on the greater evidence.
5. Therefore, a wise man should never believe in miracles.

THE ANSWER TO HUME'S OBJECTION:

The evidence for regular events is NOT always greater than that for the rare.

Examples from Hume's own worldview:

1. The Big Bang is not based on regular events. (Yet Hume, if he were here today, would believe in it!)
2. The origin of life on earth does not occur regularly. (Yet, we are here!)
3. Macro evolution cannot be repeated. (If it happened at all, it is a rare event.)
4. The entire history of the earth cannot be repeated.

PHILOSOPHICAL BIAS Against Miracles

"It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that ***we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes..... for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.***"

Richard Lewontin, New York Review of Books, January 9, 1997

Divine providence IS NOT a miracle.